

10753

42

A

L E T T E R

TO THE

P R - N C - P - L . of *H-rtf-rd-College.*

[Price Three-pence.]



A

L E T T E R

TO THE

P R - N C - P - L of *H-rtf-rd-College,*

CONCERNING

His Remarks on **Job, CANTICLES, and PROVERBS.**

k

By PHILO-BIBLICUS, W. W.

“ Beware lest any Man spoil you through Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the
“ Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ.”
Coloff. ii. 8. “ —Casting down Imaginations, and every high Thing that
“ exalteth itself against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity
“ every Thought to the Obedience of Christ.” 2 Cor. x. 5.—“ Receive with
“ Meekness the *engrafted* Word, which is able to save your Souls.” St. James i. 21.
—“ And that from a Child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are
“ able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through Faith, which is in Christ
“ Jesus.” 2 Tim. iii. 15.—“ Train up a Child in the Way he should go; and
“ when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Prov. xxii. 6.

L O N D O N,

Printed for M. FOLINGSBY, near *Temple-Bar.*
MDCCCLXXIII.

5 0059

A

LETTER, &c.

REVEREND SIR,

Jan. 1773.

IF Job, notwithstanding the *various* Things said of him, as a *real* Person in the Book of Job; notwithstanding his connection with Noah and Daniel (Ezek. xiv. 14.), and his Example of Patience proposed to Christians by St. James (v. 11.): If, notwithstanding this, Job is to be looked upon as a *mere* Non-entity, or as one that *never* existed, then surely we may bid adieu to all History, even to *that* of our Bleſſed Saviour himself. For it may as well be supposed, by any one that is disposed to it, that *He* only was a *fictitious* Person, set forth in Scripture, as

doing so and so for the Example of Christians. And if Job must be looked upon, after all that is said of him, as a *fictitious* Person, what becomes of the Truth of God's Word, in which he is so *expressly* and *clearly* set forth as a *real* Person? and how can a *fictitious* Person's Sufferings have that *force* of Example, which those of a *real* Person have? Might it not, when urged to any one in Affliction, be justly said by him, that a Non-entity, or a Person that never existed, is no Example or Encouragement to me; he never was in *my* Circumstances; he never felt *any* thing, and of *course* not what I feel.

And if this be the Age in which the *plain* Declarations of Scripture are to be reduced to *mere* Fables or Fictions, and its Truths made to stand or fall by the Ignorance of Heathens, *mere* classical Learning, or that *Idol* of the Age *Natural Religion*, being nothing better; for as to the plain and literal meaning of the Words *Natural Religion*, the *supernatural* Revelation of God's Will to Adam, before his Fall, in and through the Garden of Eden, is, to me at least, a *full* and *ample* Proof, that there is no such Thing at all; for, if God had endued Adam with *natural* Powers, sufficient to have enabled him to have known his Will, it is not reasonable to think that he would have given him any further Instruction, because in that case it would have been needless. And if Adam, before his Fall, had no such Powers, what *just* Claim can any of his fallen, *depraved* *Posterity*, have to them?

And

And if this is the Age in which the Song of Solomon is to be reduced to a *mere* Epithalamium, or Marriage-Song, on that King's Marriage with the Daughter of Pharaoh, notwithstanding the *various* references made in Scripture, for the *spiritual* Instruction and Comfort of Men's Souls, to Marriage, or the Union of Man and Wife, under the Words, *married*, *Bride*, *Bridegroom*, *Husband*, *Wife*, and *Marriage*, especially in the 45th Psalm; and 5th ch. to the Ephesians; and, notwithstanding the *suitableness* and *Propriety* of such a representation, on account of the very *strong*, *natural*, and *mutual* tendency of Man and Woman, visible in the Comparison of Jonathan and David's Love to that of Women (2 Sam. i. 26); in Adam's hearkening to Eve, to the breach of God's Commands, to his own Ruin (Gen. iii. 17.); in Jacob's Service for Rebekah (Gen. xxix. 30); in David's Adultery with Bathsheba, and murder of Urias (2 Sam. xi.); and in the *very* common and *evil*-threatening Practices of Fornication, Adultery, and Divorces, in *this* our Land — And if this be the Age, in which it is asserted, that the Name of our Blessed Lord is not mentioned in the Song of Solomon, though there is *express* Scripture-warrant for the *typical* Evidence, or *prophetic* Representations of our Blessed Lord in Persons and Things, in the Old Testament; as to Persons, in Adam (Rom. v. 14.), in Isaac (Heb. xi. 19.), in Moses (Deut. xviii. 15, and Acts iii. 22.), in David (Isai. lv. 3. Acts xiii. 34.), and in Jonah (St.

(St. Matthew xii. 40.); and as to Things, Christ is called our *Passover* (1 Cor. v. 7.), and the *First Fruits* (1 Cor. xv. 23.), and the Law is said to be the *Shadow* of good Things to come (Heb. x. 1.), and a *Schoolmaster* to bring us to Christ (Gal. iii. 24.); for, as such is the *typical* Evidence that the Old Testament gives to our Blessed Lord, why may *He* not (to say the least, for I myself am *thoroughly* persuaded upon the *above* evidence, not to mention the *significancy* and *suitableness* of the Titles *themselves*, that our Blessed Lord is typified under, and of *course* named in Solomon and in דוד (David), so *repeatedly* mentioned as the *Spouse*, or *Husband*, in the second Chapter, and elsewhere in the Song.—And if this is the Age, in which a Part of Scripture, namely, the Description of a virtuous Wife in the Proverbs (c. xxxi.), is called a *Child of Fancy*, a new disposition of some parts of Scripture, with Alterations of the Text, have been proposed (but I hope since *quite* dropped), and a *farrago* of *unauthenticated* Manuscripts are preparing, with a View to a new Translation of the Bible.

In short, Sir, if this be the age for *such* Things as these, surely it cannot be a very *proper* one for a new Translation; because *these* Things give *very* great Reason to fear, that it will not be a *very good* one. The Derogations of the Truth of God's Word, the Test and Trial of its Truth, by Heathen *Ignorance*, or Classical *Learning*, as it is called, The *Denial* or *Contempt*, of the *typical, mystical,*

or *spiritual* Sense of Scripture; and an *Attempt* to alter and transpose Parts of Scripture, will have a *natural* Tendency to produce a *Variety* of Perversions and Corruptions in a new Translation; and some *unauthenticated* Manuscript or other, may be *trumped* up to favour *almost* any Sense *whatever*. And, indeed, before a new Translation is attempted, I could wish to see the *pure, uncorrupted Hebrew* Scriptures *generally* understood, and the Word of God taught in its *full, entire* Simplicity, by comparing *spiritual* Things with *spiritual*, or explaining one Part of Scripture by another, without the *miserably* prevalent, mixed Notions and Corruptions of *Heathen* Authors, and with a *total* rejection of all *various* Readings, *borrowed* from *unauthenticated* Manuscripts: For then we might, under God, with *great* reason expect to find *much* spiritual Benefit and Improvement in a new Translation. And had the Men of this Age been educated in the Knowledge of the *pure* Hebrew Scriptures, and their minds *early* and *thoroughly* stored with the *divine* and *only* saving Truths of God's Word, and of course kept *free* from the *Errors* and *Corruptions* of *benighted Heathens*, and consequently from the *early*, and therefore *hard* to be removed, *Prejudices* to God's Word, *thereby* contracted, we should not, I am persuaded, have had the Outcry that has been made against a Subscription to the Articles; and the Youth much better qualified to have subscribed to them at their Entrance at the University, inasmuch as they would then,

at

at *that* time of life, have been pretty well versed in Scripture Truths, or the Knowledge of the Bible. And to store the Minds of Children and Youths with *those* Truths, and with such *only*, saving Knowledge ought in *all* Reason and *Duty* to be the *first* Care, and *chief* Business of *all* Parents and Teachers. *Heathenism* ought to be left to *Heathens*, to those who have no *better ordinary* Light, to *direct* and *guide* them, than *Heathen* Writers, or *mixed divine, traditional* Knowledge: But for Christians to make *Heathen* Authors and Exercises, and Compositions agreeable *thereunto*, the *main* and *chief* Instruction of Children, is nothing less than to shut out the Day-light, and light up Candles; is nothing less than (to use the Words of the Prophet Jeremiah, ch. ii. ver. 13.) forsaking God, the Fountain of *living* Waters, and hewing out Cisterns, *broken* Cisterns, which will hold no Water. And what less is it than a Contempt of God's Word, which can *only* make us *wise* unto Salvation, as it is giving *Heathen* Ignorance and Darkness, the Preference to the *marvellous* Light of the *glorious* Gospel of Christ; and of course the propagating *Heathenism* instead of Christianity, or God's Word, in the World. For how can we, *in general*, expect *truly* Christian Preachers from *such* an Education as *this* is? The Persons *thus* educated, *will* and *can* only preach according to what they have been taught, unless, through God's *special* Grace, they be made to get above the

the *poisonous* and *destructive* Errors and Prejudices of their Education, become *wiser* than their Teachers, and have Courage and Disinterestedness enough to preach and speak *purely* and *entirely* as the *Oracles* of God, to the *saving* of their own Souls, and the Souls of such as are committed to their Care. But, after all, if this should be the Age for a new Translation, my *hearty* Prayer to God in Christ, for our Zion's Sake, is, that *He* will be pleased to watch over the Persons concerned therein, to over-rule their Errors and Prejudices, and to open their Eyes and dispose their Hearts to see, display, and propagate the *wonderous* and *gracious* Things of his Law, in the Work assigned them. And in *full* Faith and Confidence in God's Goodness and Care of his Church, and our Blessed Lord's *infallible* Assurance to St. Peter, that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it (St. Matt. xvi. 18.), I rest assured, that God will do so, in case a new Translation is attempted, unless our *great* Contempt of his Blessed Word, and *long* continued and *increasing* Transgressions of his *righteous* Laws, in this our Land, have not rendered us *unworthy* of *such* a Blessing; *unworthy* even of any *longer* Continuance of *that* Light of his Gospel, which we now enjoy. But this I *further* hope, and trust in God, through Christ, is not even *yet* our *deplorable* case, though there is *such great*, *such very great* Reason to fear it is so, as to *demand* our *utmost present* Care, Dil-

[10]

gence, and Improvement under it, in order to prevent it.

I am,

REVEREND SIR,

With all due Deference and Respect,

Your's sincerely,

50059

PHILO-BIBLICUS.

